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Ground Floor, 38 Woods Street,
Darwin NT 0800
GPO Box 2026, Darwin NT 0801
T: (08) 8947 1755
E: territory.labor@nt.alp.org.au
www.territorylabor.com.au



Redistribution Committee
Northern Territory Electoral Commission
GPO Box 2419
DARWIN NT 0801

secretariat.ntec@nt.gov.au

Dear Redistribution Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the first proposed redistribution of NT divisions for the 2023 Northern Territory Redistribution.

Territory Labor agrees with many of the proposed boundary changes of the first proposed redistribution and thanks the Committee for the work it has undertaken.

However, some feedback on issues that have been identified is outlined below with the overall intent of best meeting the principles of redistribution in the Electoral Act 2004.

Palmerston

Acknowledging the significant over enrolment of the division of Spillett, Territory Labor supports the proposal that the division of Spillett lose the suburbs of East Arm and Wishart, as well as its section of Berrimah (including Northcrest) to the division of Fong Lim. Territory Labor also supports Spillett to lose the suburbs of Pinelands, Tivendale, Elrundie and Marlow Lagoon to the division of Nelson, as well as the suburb of Archer to the division of Brennan, and the suburb of Mitchell to the division of Brennan.

These changes reduce elector numbers in the Palmerston divisions enough that all 4 are within 5% of the quota and is as minimally disruptive as possible in doing so.

However Labor does have some issues with the recommended split between the three remaining Palmerston seats Drysdale, Brennan and Blain.

Suburbs are not the only, or even the main, communities of interest in Palmerston and the current divisions of Drysdale, Blain and Brennan better match stronger communities of interest being the old suburbs of Palmerston (Moulden, Driver, Woodroffe and Gray - suburbs that have been around for around 30 years), the developed suburbs of Palmerston (Farrar, Gunn and Bakewell which have been completed in the last 20 years and the new suburbs of Palmerston - the remaining suburbs to the East and South.

To more accurately reflect the principle of communities of interest Drysdale, Brennan and Blain should remain unchanged. This better satisfies the principles outlined in the Electoral Act 2004 139A (d) and minimises the number of electors being transferred from one division to another.

Daly/Gwoja

The NTEC acknowledges significant under enrolment across remote regions of the Northern Territory and should acknowledge this with greater flexibility on quota for bush seats, giving more weight to the principles outlined in Electoral Act 2004 139A (a), (b) and (c).

With both Daly and Gwoja currently under quota by 1.4% and 4.8% respectively, and well within the legislated tolerance of 20%, there is no imperative to change the boundary as proposed. While the proposal intends to put a whole SA1 area into a single electorate, SA1 areas have little bearing on communities of interest.

Amanbidji and Bulla have strong kinship links with communities already in Daly leading to high mobility between the communities. By reunifying these communities within the Daly electorate, the division could be serviced alongside similar communities. By contrast, the proposal that that the division of Daly lose the community of Timber Creek and its outstations separates communities of interest and proposes that they be serviced by a member who also has responsibility for culturally and linguistically disconnected communities 2000km away.

If, despite known under enrolment in remote regions, Gwoja is to grow closer to quota, then this can be achieved through the addition of Ti Tree, Wilora and Pmara Jutunta which would reunite communities of cultural and spiritual interest into the electorate.

Labor thanks the Committee on their work on the difficult task of redistribution however submits that by making fewer changes to existing boundaries the Committee will better deliver on the spirit and intent of the principles of redistribution and, importantly, enable better representation for Territorians.

Kind Regards



Karlee Dalton

Secretary

Territory Labor